



Grow Community – Sopwell 4th Annual General Meeting Minutes

7pm, 19th September 2024

Cottonmill Community and Cycling Centre, Old Oak, off Cottonmill Lane, AL1 2EF

Attendees:

Kate Swindells KS
Lee Wood LW
Sonya Jefferson SJ
Jo Cooney JC
Nelly Cronier-Mackie NCM

Valerie Rodriguez VR
Michelle Mackenzie MM
Sian Goodwin SG
Yvonne Broadway YB
Dominic Robertson DR
Astor D.

Apologies:

Rachel Baker
Anne Cowan
Liz Hunt
Alison Shipperlee
Debbie Hall
Tina Swain

Minutes

<u>Agenda Item</u>		<u>Action</u>	<u>Responsible</u>
1. Welcome,	Welcome and tour		

apologies for absence and introduction (KS)	<p>Chair Kate Swindells welcomed people to the meeting and gave a short tour of growing places at the Community Centre, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mini orchard • The ornamental trees • The nut trees by the dirt jumps • The raised planters out the front of the Centre 		
2. Approval of minutes of 2023 AGM (KS)	<p>Proposed Jo Cooney Seconded Michelle Mackenzie Minutes accepted.</p>		
3. Matters arising (KS)	No matters arising.		
4. Annual Report and updates a) Events & Activities (KS & LW)	<p>Kate reported it's been a busy year preparing for the Jigsaw Meadow project in the Autumn and Spring. We had the successful wreath making workshop in December, with pre-made wreath bases, a foliage walk and then a making session. Hopefully we will do this again this year. We did the New Year plant hunt, as suggested by Lee, and identified any wildflowers still in flower. The group saw several varieties, identified by some knowledgeable attendees. Kate has the seedling stall outside her house. We had our Open Garden Day with cakes and a plant swap in May, which was a nice event. New for this year, we had a children's garden day, run by Lee, and Sonya's mini meadow.</p> <p>Lee reported that we had the children's garden event for four hours in the Summer. We planned for two but it was very popular. Lee's dad provided tomatoes and sunflowers and there were some plants donated by Nottcutts. The children made fat balls, planted plants in the area, and did a bug hunt. People were really willing to be engaged and then eight people came to do the butterfly hunt from the Alban Way to the Community Garden, where they saw sixteen species. It was a shame that John O'Conner mowed the meadow at Berner's Drive so we couldn't do a follow up event, but it was good to see how many people came along.</p>		

b) Berners Drive & CCCC (KS)	<p>Kate reported that despite the wet and slugs, the Community Garden is doing well. The autumn fruiting raspberries are doing well there, and people seem to be picking them. We have just planted some winter salads for people. We've sown a plants for pollinators down there in the triangle area.</p> <p>At the Community Centre, we have the beds for the Scouts and Leeanna's Wish's youth group, so we are getting more people involved.</p>		
c) Mini-meadow and Abbots Avenue planters (SJ)	<p>Sonya reported that last year, John O'Conner mowed it last year before the seeds had been collected. It started to flower in Spring and there was lots going on in February, where there was a lot of rain and it was late to cut. It was grassy but the Scouts came and did some planting before John O'Conner cut it again. We have put a request into John O'Conner to say what we want and they want us to meet their Biodiversity rep, who will advise us what we should be doing(!). We note that we have had expert advice from local groups and feel that perhaps the mowing rather than the planting is the problem. John O'Conner has put in guidance so that people on the ground must phone their manager rather than overruling the mow maps.</p> <p>The Scouts have nearly finished their nature badge, although the mowing meant they couldn't finish.</p> <p>We usually do evening sessions at the plants, although there has been scaffolding up. It is now taken over by lemon balm and bindweed, so we need to get in and do a session now the scaffolding has gone.</p>		
d) Jigsaw Meadow Project (KS & SJ)	<p>We got seeds from John O'Conner as compensation for the last time they mowed down the meadow. Some of Sandy Walkington's locality budget also went towards the project.</p> <p>Sandridge were doing their Jigsaw Meadow last year, and Sonya thought it would work well in Sopwell. The launch of the project was successful, where</p>		

	<p>we handed out around 50 packs of seeds and participants had the option to listen to advice on planting from speakers at the event.</p> <p>The Jigsaw Meadow was a great opportunity to connect individuals and organisations around the area. At the upcoming Autumn Festival, we are going to have a small exhibition of pictures on foamex boards of people's pictures of their meadows (and this may end up at the Abbey Line station as a pop-up exhibition).</p> <p>Michelle noted that it took a long time for her seeds to grow, but now they have and they look great.</p> <p>Gail suggested perhaps making some of the pictures bigger and they could be used to decorate e.g. the Centre.</p>		
5. Financial Report (NCM & RB)	<p>The total income is c.£1.7k and the expenditure was c.£1.5k, mainly on training (£348) and events (£450). Event spend was higher than last year, but the rest of the expenditure was similar to last year. Our bank balance is currently just under £3k, although there are a few cheques still to go out.</p> <p>Gail asked if there were plans for the money. We keep £1k reserve, after owings we have £1.6k to spend, although some of this is allocated to hall hire from previous grants. Kate would like to spend some on compost for the raised beds outside the Community Centre. Kate would like to get a noticeboard behind the bench at the Community Garden.</p> <p>Sian noted that the Church (St Stephen's) is looking at boards to put around the churchyard to explain the different plants in the area. We would like to hand signs but we need to work with the Council to work out how we can do this as we have restrictions under our Licence to Occupy. Gail thinks signs would be useful to get more people involved. It would also be helpful to</p>		

	<p>indicate to John O’Conner it’s a no-mow area and help residents know what the area is. Sonya’s positive take away is that another member of the public reported it, and there was community interest in the garden.</p>		
<p>6. Election of Committee Members (KS)</p>	<p>Voting in of the Committee</p> <p>a) Chair: Kate Swindells Proposed: Lee Wood Seconded by: Gail Jackson Vote: passed</p> <p>b) Treasurer: Nelly Cronier-Mackie Proposed: Kate Swindells Seconded by: Michelle Mackenzie Vote: passed</p> <p>Co-Treasurer: Rachel Baker Proposed: Kate Swindells Seconded by: Michelle Mackenzie Vote: passed</p> <p>c) Additional Committee member(s)</p> <p>Trustee: Jo Cooney Proposed: Lee Wood Seconded by: Gail Jackson Vote: passed</p> <p>Trustee: Lee Wood Proposed: Jo Cooney Seconded by: Kate Swindells Vote: passed</p>		

	<p>Trustee: Gail Jackson Proposed: Jo Cooney Seconded by: Sonya Jefferson Vote: passed</p> <p>Trustee: Sonya Jefferson Proposed: Nelly Cronier-Mackie Seconded by: Lee Wood Vote: passed</p> <p>Trustee: Alison Shipperlee Proposed: Kate Swindells Seconded by: Michelle Mackenzie Vote: passed</p>		
7. Appointment of Secretary (in-coming Chair)	The Chair appointed Jo Cooney as secretary.		
8. AOB (in-coming Chair)	There was no other business.		
	<p>Thank you to all who attended!</p> <p>The meeting was ended with a lovely sharing buffet, with treats brought by members of the Grow Community.</p>		

Appendix 1: Financial report

Grow Community - Sopwell Balance Sheet September 2023 - August 2024

	Aug-20	Aug-21	Aug-22	Aug-23	Aug-24
Bank	£2,385.21	£4,863.46	£3,558.82	£2,591.79	£2,790.85
Petty Cash	£62.50	£32.50	£32.50	£32.50	£32.50
Aylett's Gift Card			£6.08	£117.19	£131.93
	£2,447.71	£4,895.96	£3,597.40	£2,741.48	£2,955.28
Stock					
Prepays/ Deferred Inc		£149.29	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Current Assets	£2,447.71	£5,045.25	£3,597.40	£2,741.48	£2,955.28
Accruals		£1,168.80	£10.75		£0.00
Grants					
Raised Beds Core	-£349.60	-£349.60	-£349.60	£0.00	£0.00
Expenses	£59.24	£59.24	£59.24	£0.00	£0.00
RHS		£243.52	£243.52	£0.00	£0.00
Grow & Give		£2,357.32	£2,357.32	£1,235.75	
			£6.08		
Liabilities	-£290.36	£3,479.28	£2,327.31	£1,235.75	£0.00
Assets	£2,738.07	£1,565.97	£1,270.09	£1,505.73	£2,955.28
Capital					
Retained Capital	£1,030.07	£2,738.07	£1,565.97	£1,270.09	£1,505.73
Net profit Current Year	£1,708.00	-£1,172.10	-£295.88	£235.64	£278.31
	£2,738.07	£1,565.97	£1,270.09	£1,505.73	£1,784.04